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Composting: Sustainable Efforts on a University Scale

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Composting: Sustainable Efforts on a University Scale

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Department of Sociology and Anthropology

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ABSTRACT

The present study addresses cultural standpoints on solid food waste management into composting in the hopes of establishing food composting units on a university campus. The study addresses the cultural standpoints through qualitative data in relation to cultural, economic, and political spheres. The hypothesis for the study is the data will reflect a positive outlook in assessing the cost and benefits of composting units. The implementation of a food waste composting programs presents various costs and benefits in regard to economic and social needs that can have an impact on human interaction with the use of natural resources.

Keywords: Composting, Sustainability, Applied Anthropology

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Introduction

The physical environment is a crucial source for the development of societies throughout the course of history. With the increase in population growth the impact of human behaviors on the planet's resources has increased, causing depletion of natural resources that will one day become obsolete without intervention. Countries that hold a developed status use a high level of resources to maintain advancements in production, and technology to facilitate a wealthy economy. As a result these societies generate more waste products than resources available. The ongoing rate of consumption of natural resources to sustain the population in the United States alone produces approximately 3/4 of all the municipal solid waste in the world. Currently in the United States, over 97% of food waste is estimated to be buried in landfills (Levis 2010). There are many efforts being made to counteract the impact mankind has on the planet's resources including waste management techniques, biodegradable products, recycling, and alternative energy technology. One waste management technique is the method of composting biodegradable materials to be repurposed mainly for agriculture (Michel 2010). Composting is the biological process of converting organic substrate, in the presence of oxygen into carbon dioxide and water, heat, new cell generation and humus. Significant mass reduction occurs through the entire process but varies greatly depending on the nature of the substrates and the composting process (Seng et al. 2012: 221). This natural process of decomposition results in the production of an organic matter byproduct that can be used to fertilize and enrich the quality of soil (Michel 2010). Solid food waste composting can affect the level of permaculture, a practice of cultivating food, energy etc, by relying on self-sustaining or renewable resources, in surrounding communities.

An affect on permaculture can occur by changing social behaviors, economics and policies associated with promoting sustainability programs (Ulloa 2010). At least three quantitative studies (Rahmani, Seng, and Sussman) have suggested that the social aspect of establishing new social norms, in terms of conserving the environment, creates a culturally accepted behavior of continuously practicing methods of conservation. This creates a bridge between an individual's ecological values and various sectors such as social interaction with the environment, financial incentives favored by economics and government officials to drive environmental policies. The present study examines the relationship between the culture and ecology of Georgia Southern University's student body with the establishment of solid food waste composting bins through social, economic, and political spheres.

Related Research Models: *Social Sphere*

In previous studies on waste-management behaviors, measurable information has been collected on the practices performed by individuals such as reusing, repurposing, or recycling goods but research in relation to waste management practices, specifically composting, on a community scale is lacking (Sussman 2013). The related research models provide insight into the effects of establishing a new environmental program or policy in a society. For example, one research study discusses the benefits of university dining facilities adopting tray-less methods by reporting numerical data collected from measuring the amount of food waste in using trays in comparison of the waste generated by going tray-less (Bolak et al. 2008). The research provides valuable information in the benefits of generating less food waste and composting in a university setting, but fails to

focus on the social aspect of the student body in adopting this new dining method or whether the decision was made by the students or institution. In contrast, the present study focuses on the level of knowledge, social attitudes, and behaviors of the student body regarding sustainable practices through the design of close-ended survey questions, outlined through a study conducted by Sussman and Gifford (2013). In that study the researchers outline the general benefits of composting. Some benefits include reducing the amount of organic waste in landfill space, reduction of greenhouse gases and creating a usable organic byproduct. Landfill space is growing scarce around the globe, and the composting of organic waste provides an alternative option to increase space and repurpose the waste as a resource. Greenhouse gases deteriorate the stratosphere region, commonly known as the ozone layer, and the process of composting reduces the greenhouse gases to help mitigate climate change. Composting also creates a usable organic byproduct that can be marketable as a soil supplement over chemical fertilizers (Sussman 2013: 323). The framework suggested to explain how social norms are established is referred to as the Theory of Normative Conduct (Sussman 2013: 324). The Theory of Normative Conduct discusses a pattern in which once a social norm is established the normative actions of the desired behavior will soon follow by individuals who have not yet practiced the desired behavior and new individuals who will most likely adopt the normative behavior further sealing it as a common practice within the community (324). There are two norms that were focused in the research study: *injunctive norms* and *descriptive norms* (324). The *injunctive norm* is described as what *ought* to be done while *descriptive norm* is described as what actually *is* done (Sussman 2013: 324). The importance of linking both norms promoting pro-environmental

behaviors to be adopted in society was stressed by the researchers. A newly established social norm will not occur without the society deeming it acceptable (injunctive norms, and widely practiced, descriptive norms) (325). This theoretical framework is valuable for the present study, which applies aspects of the theory to a university model through examining current solid food waste management practices in use and the potential social impact on the student body in adopting composting bins to the campus. A current food waste management technique practiced at Georgia Southern University is the utilization of machines that extract water from food waste generated by the dining facilities. However, solid food matter that remains is left without a plan to be reused or recycled. The aim of this study is to begin the pathway of forming a solution for dealing with the remaining solid materials by providing composting bins on or near the campus of Georgia Southern University by first assessing the relationship of cultural attitudes and behaviors and ecology of the university student body if such program were to be implemented. The utilization of carefully designed closed-ended survey questions of the student body allow me to assess the diverse social views in terms of sustainable practices playing a role in the participants' interaction with their home community and university community. In addition, the establishment of a composting program on a university campus requires funding for the bins which is the second area that will be discussed.

Economic Sphere

The economic side of environmental policies and programs mainly seeks to bridge the gap between economic values and ecological values, a practice commonly referred to as "green" or "natural" capitalism (Reno 2011: 389). There are various

difficulties in creating an association between these two areas, such as establishing a market, specifically a system to adequately measure the "true value" of nature. A stable market system will help the "metabolic rift" meaning a divide between the capitalist industries and the nonhuman environment on which they depend (389). The promotion of "clean energy economies" addressed by Reno is founded on ideologies that capitalism and industry should be motivated on the real limitations and possibilities of the environment rather than fictitious representations of value (389). This directly reflects the great need to have an established system to adequately measure the value of natural resources and the social and environmental costs of the ongoing use of fossil fuels. In addition, these difficulties reflect the need for a market for composting in establishing a needed system for measuring the amount of initial resources, resources broken down through decomposition and organic byproduct produced. By measuring the levels of greenhouse gases and resources used and produced during composting in contrast to levels in landfills, numeric data provides evidence to what course of action is more beneficial for the environment and society in the long term. Capitalists in favor of pro-environmental policies in society are referred to as "Natural" capitalists because they focus on the market of renewable resources rather than the use of fossil fuels (390). The main driving force to any environmental policy or economic plan being established is through financial incentives which are favored by economics and government officials (390). For example, in a related research study designed to assess compost users' attitudes toward composting application programs within Florida, the study not only assessed social attitudes on implementing composting bins through telephone surveys but demonstrated that the benefits of composting organic wastes were only met if a market

creates an ongoing demand for compost to be used for more than a limited extent of growers in a community (Rahmani 2004: 55). The research study also questioned the use of incentives for potential compost users to help generate a needed market. The use of incentives to generate compost users is evident in the data collected by Reno (2011) through interviews of government employees and farmers that use biodegradable bins stipend by the government in the United Kingdom through Renewables Obligation Certificates (ROC). Renewables Obligation Certificates are quota obligations of energy suppliers to invest in a number of renewable resources annually or pay a "buyout fee" for every megawatt hour below their obligation. The certificate was a virtual representation of the megawatt hour of renewable electricity generated from energy suppliers (Reno 2011: 394). In the use of government stipends to create financial incentives, it is argued that in order for economic and ecological values to be bridged individual motivations must be brought in line with ecological imperatives through the ideology of economic incentives creating a scaling up of self-interest in the participants to gaining economic wealth that will lead to the valuing of ecological issues (Reno 2011: 407). This model is explored in the present study to assess the ecological values of the student body and construct economic proposals to aid in the funding of composting bins such as through the Sustainability Fee, which is a newly approved Georgia Southern University student fee for the use of sustainable efforts. The bridging of economics with ecological values also has a role in affecting governmental policies on environmental issues since government officials favor environmental policies that encompass some economic benefit or incentive which will be discussed further.

Political Sphere

In the allocation of scarce resources to sustain a growing global population, there has to be order to create a stable society though the system still has some flaws where resources are not allocated equally. With the social and economic impacts discussed, both spheres play a role in the political sphere of environmental policies. For example, the social aspect of establishing a new social norm in terms of conserving the environment creates a bridge between individuals' ecological values and their attempt to gain financial wealth through innovation or technology. One method of gaining financial wealth is through subsidies by the state or federal government. This leads to the implementation of environmental policies by governments which agree to provide subsidies and implement environmental policies against unlawful acts against the environment. This correlation of spheres is demonstrated through a study by Seng et al. The purpose of the study was to compile data in order to express the benefits of composting in terms of composting products, landfill life extensions and greenhouse gas mitigation through measuring municipal solid waste generated from different scenarios such as households, markets, restaurants, schools, and hotels (Seng et al 2012: 218). It was conducted in the capital of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, which had a total population in 2008 of approximately 1.3 million people with an average household size of 5.1 (217). The social aspect of the study discussed various areas that contribute to the vast waste generation in a population such as the vast population increase, urbanization, and excessive consumption of modern daily life with the production of more consumer products. The economic argument of waste generation is from industrialization that uses raw materials to facilitate industrial means of production as well as create goods for

society which creates economic growth. The political realm is the creation of environmental policies for the effectiveness of allocating scarce resources and managing the waste techniques which was largely using landfills to deposit waste because it was simple in application, cost effective, accommodated large fluctuations in the amount and type of waste deposited, and available land (216). Environmental politics encompasses many realms of policies mostly through the Environmental Protection Agency within the United States and in other forms throughout the globe, such as the Ministry of Environment in Cambodia. Environmental politics have a role in the present study through assessing the social and economic realms and how it may impact future approval of environmental policies. The Sustainability Fee was approved by a vast majority of the student body to add an additional student fee for the use of sustainable efforts in the campus which demonstrates some pro-environmental attitudes among students who deem it acceptable to pay an additional institutional fee for pro-environmental efforts. This relates to politics in persuading the needs and wants of the student body of further environmental programs, such as implementing composting bins, and advocating to necessary administration that by implementing such programs it creates a way for the university to become more sustainable and economically self-sufficient. Composting provides a mean for the university to be more economically self-sufficient by producing their own compost for landscaping uses and creating a market for compost through selling the organic byproduct to members in the surrounding community. Further research can assess these areas more in depth and formulate means to making changes within a university setting, community setting or perhaps global setting.

Methods

The procedure of the present study to assess the relationship of culture and ecology of the university student body was distributing surveys either through an online survey generator or live format. The surveys consisted of a total of 30 closed-ended questions addressing each cultural sphere (social, economic, and political), which are incorporated into the overall analysis of the sample. Initially, the survey (Qualtrics) gathered information about the individual to determine the demographics of the sample. Next, questions assessed the participants' knowledge of sustainable practices at Georgia Southern University and the level of support in offering additional courses into their field of study that address environmental topics. Questions pertaining to the social sphere of the study included sustainable practices being encouraged throughout their interaction with their surrounding communities and traditional and social media they use on a daily basis. The political sphere consisted of assessing participants' attitudes on potential actions to be undergone by the Student Government Association at Georgia Southern University. Some proposed actions were to include environmental topics in regular Student Government Association meetings, incorporate representatives from organizations that promote sustainability or committees to address environmental issues on campus, as well as whether the administration of Georgia Southern University encourages sustainable practices. In addition, questions assessing the economic sphere asked participants' level of support on donations from alumni and sponsors donating funds to go towards buying composting bins, on-campus businesses selling more eco-friendly products, participants buying said products and their attitudes on whether buying eco-friendly products would be a productive use of their income. Lastly, the remaining

line of questions evaluate participants' attitudes and behaviors, particularly on the process of composting, knowledge of where solid food waste goes when it leaves Georgia Southern University and if the added Sustainability fee should go into funding the composting program.

Results

The main approach in evaluating the data was to analyze each question response to discover any trends within the data. The responses were categorized in terms of positive, neutral, and negative trends. The main demographic population of the sample was female, Caucasian, single, enrolled in second year of undergraduate study, median age of 19, associated with Conservative political ideologies, and current occupational status of not working at the moment. This demographic data provided additional insight into the majority of the participants to determine if a target group existed (Fig.1). The responses of the sample gave a spectrum of variety. In assessing the overall knowledge of the respondents on sustainability practices, almost half of the sample was unaware of sustainability practices currently in use at Georgia Southern University. The level of awareness on sustainable practices may relate to the data trend on more courses that focus on sustainable practices to be offered to the participant's field of study. There was a largely neutral or negative trend for these two questions. This trend will be discussed further. One of the main areas of questioning in regards to evaluating prior knowledge of sustainable practices was to gauge the level of importance of such practices in the participants' community as a whole and the media they use on a daily basis to assess the range of ecological values within the sample. The broad scope shows a negative trend in responses to sustainable practices being encouraged throughout their community and

online usage. Online usage included comparing sustainable practices being encouraged in traditional media (e.g. newspapers, magazines, books, articles, television, movies, etc.) to social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs, Tumblr, Pinterest, etc.). In viewing both sets of data, the responses represent a 5% difference in negative trends between traditional and social media. Out of the total responses, 65% reflected sustainable practices not being encouraged through traditional media while 70% reflected lack of encouragement in social media the participants use on a daily basis (Fig. 2). This set of data can be useful in determining methods to raise awareness and capture audiences.

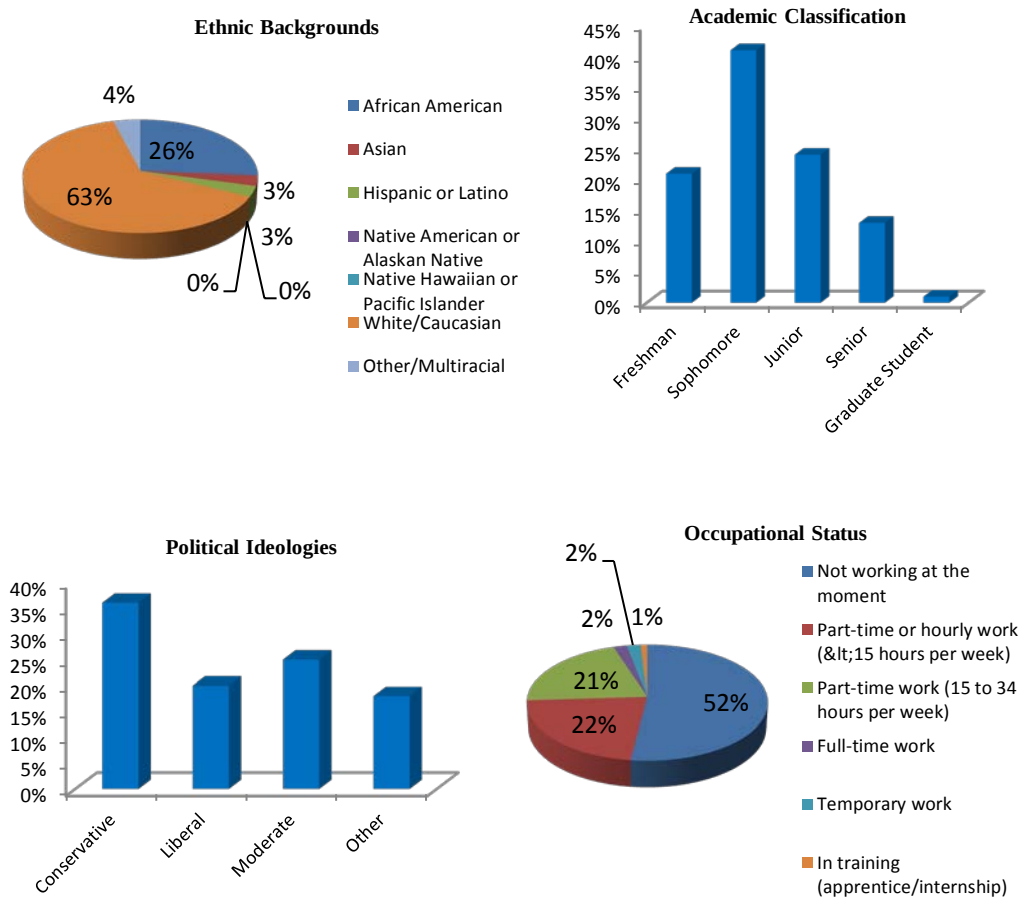

Figure 1. Representation of the demographics of the sample

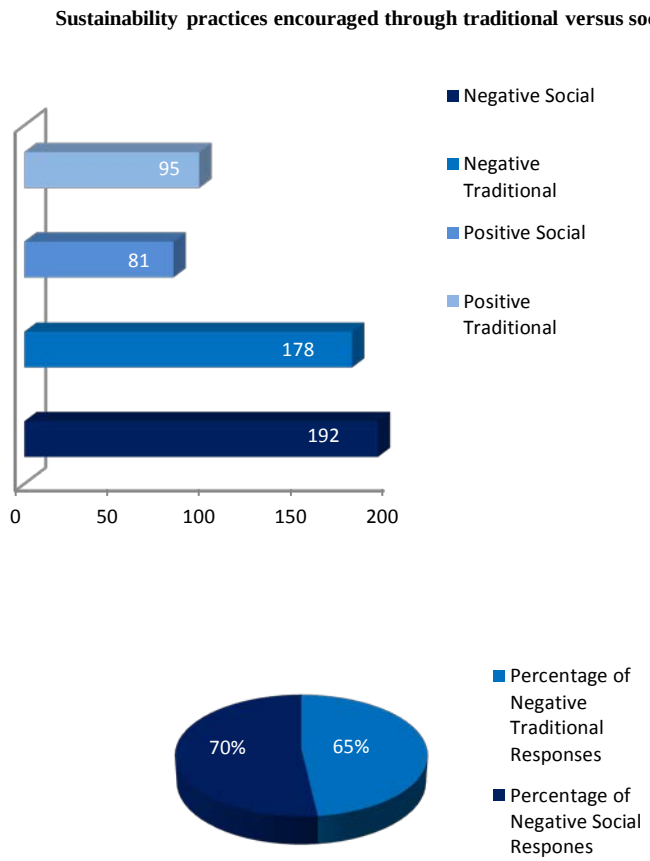

Figure 2. Representation of the negative trend of encouragement of sustainable practices in comparing traditional media to social media.

Data in relation to the political sphere portray a positive trend regarding actions being performed through the Student Government Association to address environmental issues. The Student Government Association is student run and supported which is evident in the response trend to the questions of the Student Government Association incorporating committees or representatives from organizations that promote sustainability and discussing environmental topics into their regular meetings. The averages show a 74/26 percent split of incorporating committees/representatives versus a 62/37 percent split of

including environmental topics in meetings. Lastly, the approach in evaluating the data in regards to the economic sphere was through a cross tabulation between three separate questions that dealt with funding the composting bins and the occupational status of the sample. Further details will be provided below. The data are represented in Figure 3 below which illustrates the scope of the responses in terms of occupation status. The following paragraphs will discuss the interpretations of the data in addition to any proposals.

		What is your current occupational status?							
		Not working at the moment	Part-time or hourly work (15 hrs/week)	Part-time work (15 to 34 hrs/ week)	Full-time work	Temp work	In training	Mean	Total
On-campus bus. Should sell more eco-friendly products.	SA	29	10	14	0	5	2	2.13	60
	Agree	70	34	30	3	1	1	1.81	139
	Neutral	34	12	13	2	0	0	1.72	61
	DA	5	2	0	0	0	0	1.29	7
	SDA	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Total	139	58	57	5	6	3	-	268
I would buy eco-friendly products from on-campus bus.	SA	26	12	15	0	4	2	2.15	59
	Agree	70	30	28	3	1	1	1.78	133
	Neutral	34	13	13	1	1	0	1.74	62
	DA	8	3	1	1	0	0	1.62	13
	SDA	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
	Total	140	58	57	5	6	3	-	269
I think buying eco-friendly products would be a productive use of my income.	SA	26	10	11	0	3	2	2.04	52
	Agree	55	28	21	2	2	1	1.82	109
	Neutral	48	17	22	2	1	0	1.79	90
	DA	8	2	2	1	0	0	1.69	13
	SDA	3	1	1	0	0	0	1.6	5
	Total	140	58	57	5	6	3	-	269

Figure 3. Cross-tabulation of participants' responses regarding their current occupation status and economic based questions.

Discussion

In the process of evaluating the data collected, many interpretations arose based on the numerical responses to the survey questions. The positive, neutral, and negative numeric trends provided insight into the relationship between culture and ecology of the participants in terms of the social, political, and economic outlook of establishing a composting program at Georgia Southern University. The social sphere results represented almost half of the collected sample not being familiar with sustainable practices at Georgia Southern University, a majority reflected neutral attitudes to more curriculum being offered in the participant's field of study that focus on practices to help sustain the environment, and a negative trend in sustainable practices being encouraged in their community and online lives. This data allows room for potential proposals to be constructed that could address these trends in order to carry out desired outcomes which is to promote awareness on environmental issues and sustainable practices that can be performed to lower an individual's carbon footprint. In relation to the addition of curriculum to encompass more topics on the environment, Georgia Southern University has a Sustainability Concentration that consists of 18 credit hours and a practicum as a finished project. The Sustainability Concentration may be a better option to advertise to students in taking courses that address environmental and sustainable topics than add classes to their majors since every major is different with requirements and minors added along with other obligations such as internships or cooperative education. A proposal to attract more students in completing the Sustainability Concentration as well as raise awareness of sustainable practices is through an environmental literacy campaign hosted along with events held by organizations that promote sustainability (e.g. Center for Sustainability, Keep Bulloch Beautiful, SAGE, and Green Ambassadors). The

environmental literacy campaign can consist of distributing factoids on environmental issues through the dining facilities either through educational posters such as the study with the diner on organic and non-organic waste bins (Sussman). On-line distribution is also possible through the weekly email announcements from the Associate Dean of Students at Georgia Southern University. In addition to raising awareness on the campus level, awareness needs to be made on an on-line level because technology has significantly changed the method of keeping informed on information either local or globally. Technology is a crucial tool that is easily accessible to distribute information effectively to a mass audience. Even though environmental issues do come up in traditional media (e.g. newspapers, magazines, books, articles, television, documentaries, etc.) and displayed to the masses it is difficult to reach on an individual level of what media individuals are going to consume. Future studies may be able to look into this matter further and create necessary proposals to effectively advertise environmental topics and capture different audiences through an online medium.

The economic sphere represented some mixed responses across the board of questioning. One of the questions in relation to the economic sphere which encompasses the main purpose of the study assessed the level of support from the sample on the dining services at Georgia Southern University buying composting bins to recycle solid food waste. As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, Eagle Dining facilities currently have "pulpers" to recycle liquid waste that is squeezed out of the solid food waste generated but there is no current recycling method for the solid food waste that remains. The "pulpers" are a positive step in sustainability efforts on Georgia Southern University campus. The trend of the responses in regards to this question show the same trends as

the level of support towards Student Government Association taking actions to address environmental issues and/or establish a composting program without coming at a cost to the student body. There was a 50/50 split of positive and negative trends on participants' responses on donations from alumni and sponsors going toward funding the composting program. The questions assessing the ecological values and economic values of the student body evaluated the economic attitudes of the sample in purchasing goods. The results from the cross-tabulation in Figure 3 show a less significant difference in responses of positive support for businesses to sell more eco-friendly products on-campus as well as participants buying the products. An interesting find was in the next question on whether participants think buying eco-friendly products would be a productive use of their income. The overall response shows a positive trend but the responses that were not in favor increased by 12% from the average of the neutral and negative responses from the previous two questions. This portion of data can assist in the formation of marketing campaigns to engage the general public on not only purchasing eco-friendly products but raise their ecological values which will benefit the political and social spheres in the establishment of social practices that conserve the environment and have the potential to become social norms.

In addition, the political sphere of the study reflected an overall positive trend in responses toward the Student Government Association taking steps in addressing environmental topics or allowing committees or representatives from organizations that promote sustainability within the association. This trend reflects the level of support of actions being performed to promote sustainability depending on the population that is performing the actions. For example, over half of the sample were not aware of

sustainable practices at Georgia Southern University but the majority responded positively in the portion of the student body that hold higher administrative positions to address the issues. This may be a reflection of the student body shifting the course of actions to the hand of the student body who they may feel are more capable or passionate to address environmental problems that affect the university or surrounding communities. This level of support reflected through the sample can produce a positive outcome in creating a top-bottom system of environmental issues being addressed through an association that is student run and supported where campaigns and policies may be established more easily than on an individual student level. The level of support of the administration of Georgia Southern University encouraging sustainability practices reflected positive trends since the administration does allow organizations either student led or through departments to be created as long as they follow the university process or establishing an organization and uphold the policies, where they can later execute the purpose and goals of the organization.

Conclusion

With the increasing rate of population growth and consumption, the natural resources used to sustain the global population are becoming incredibly scarce while the generation of waste is posing problems due to the vast amount of waste generated. A counteractive method of waste management is the decomposition of biodegradable food waste into an organic byproduct through the process of composting. There are multiple benefits to composting which include energy recovery through anaerobic fermentation, incineration or landfill gas capturing, and the creation of an organic byproduct that enriches the quality of soil for agricultural purposes. In addition, the process of

composting extends the life of landfills and reduces the emissions of greenhouse gases such as methane by converting carbon into carbon dioxide and water that give nutrients to depleted soil and provide a natural fertilizer to decrease the use of harmful chemicals.

The present study addresses the relationship of culture and ecology of the student body at Georgia Southern University on food waste management techniques, specifically solid food waste composting, in relation to social, economic, and political spheres. By examining the participants' attitudes and behaviors toward food waste management practices, protocols can be created to effectively implement a composting program on or near the campus of Georgia Southern University. This study uses the framework of the Theory of Normative Conduct to formulate social practices within the student body on conserving the environment which have the potential to become social norms in efficiently utilizing natural resources to sustain the student body population and surrounding communities. The hypothesis of the study is the data will reflect a positive trend of the student body in implementing a solid food waste composting program. The results of the data proved positive trends in some but not all aspects of implementing a composting program. The main theme I learned throughout analyzing and interpreting the data trends was the level of support of the student body is higher in implementing composting bins if actions are taken through the Student Government Association, organizations who promote sustainable practices, or the Sustainability Fee rather than a direct cost to their time or money. This level of support may be reflected in the lack of awareness among the student body on environmental issues because those who are unaware may not place any importance on solving environmental issues or feel unequipped to handle them. A scenario where other agencies are more passionate or

capable to handle environmental issues is greatly favored rather than action on an individual scale. Another theme I learned through this study is the ecological values in comparison to the economic values of the participants. For example, in the cross tabulation of participants' occupational status and their responses to economic based questions, a higher number of negative responses was gathered from participants who work part-time or hourly work in comparison to participants who are not working at the moment on their attitudes toward buying eco-friendly products as a productive use of their income. An interpretation of this trend is a difference of value placed on money between these two groups since one group may have a better understanding of the time and energy that is inputted into generating a paycheck while the other group may not. This difference in value may play a role into the purchasing attitudes of the participants which reflects the ecological values of the participants. In addition, the relationship of culture and ecology of the student body at Georgia Southern University proved positive outlooks on the implementation of a composting program to recycle solid food waste. However, awareness of environmental topics needs to be raised among the student body where more support and action will be taken as a collective group rather than placed on certain agencies within Georgia Southern University. Changes within the social, economic, and political spheres of the relationship between culture and ecology of the student body increases the likelihood of more environmental issues being viewed as important and procedures being performed to counteract the problems. The data collected through this study and future studies will provide a better scope into creating practices on social, economic, and political scales to conserving the environment for the sustainability of local, national and global populations.

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Appendix

Please circle the number below or next to your answer or write in the information requested.

1. What is your sex? Male Female
   1 2

2. What year were you born? _____

3. What is your ethnic background?

African American	Asian	Hispanic or Latino	Native American or Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	White/Caucasian	Other
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

_____
(Please write above)

4. What is your current academic level at Georgia Southern University?

Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Graduate Student
1	2	3	4	5

5. What is your major? _____

6. What is your minor? _____ **(**Please circle) Not Applicable

7. What is your marital status?

Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed	Other
1	2	3	4	5

_____
(Please write above)

8. What are your political ideologies?

Conservative	Liberal	Moderate	Other
1	2	3	4

_____
(Please write above)

9. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

High School Diploma or GED equivalent	Some college credit but no degree	Some college credit but not yet graduated	Bachelor degree	Masters degree	Doctoral degree	Post-graduate work
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10. What is your current occupational status?

Not working at the moment	Part-time or hourly work (<15 hours per week)	Part-time work (15 to 34 hours per week)	Full-time work	Temporary work	In training (apprentice/internship)
1	2	3	4	5	6

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (Please circle your answer)

	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
11. I would prefer more classes offered in my field of study that focus on practices to help sustain the environment.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I am familiar with sustainable practices at Georgia Southern University.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Sustainability practices, including solid waste management, are encouraged by my family and community as a whole.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Sustainability practices are encouraged by traditional media (e.g. newspapers, magazines, books, articles, television, movies, etc.) that I use on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Sustainability practices are encouraged by social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs, Tumblr, Pinterest, etc.) that I use on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Environmental Policies should be a regular discussion topic in Student Government Association meetings.	1	2	3	4	5

17. Student Government Association should have representatives from organizations that promote sustainability (e.g. Center for Sustainability, Keep Bulloch Beautiful, SAGE, and Green Ambassadors).	1	2	3	4	5
18. Student Government Association should include committees to address environmental issues on campus.	1	2	3	4	5
19. The administration of Georgia Southern University encourages sustainability practices.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Eagle Dining should buy composting bins to recycle solid food waste.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Donations from alumni and sponsors should go toward buying composting bins to recycle solid food waste.	1	2	3	4	5
22. On-campus businesses should sell more eco-friendly products.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I would buy eco-friendly products from on-campus businesses.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I think buying eco-friendly products would be a productive use of my income.	1	2	3	4	5

This list of questions ask about Waste Management Practices (please circle your answer)

	Yes	**No**	**No Opinion**
25. Do you think solid food waste should be recycled into composting?	1	2	3
26. Do you think solid food waste should be unloaded into landfills?	1	2	3
27. Are you familiar with the process of	1	2	3

recycling solid food waste in the form of composting?			
28. Do you know where solid food waste goes when it leaves Georgia Southern University?	1	2	3
29. Do you think the Sustainability Fee (Green Fee) should be used to buy composting units for dining facilities at Georgia Southern University?	1	2	3
30. Would you volunteer in fundraising events held by sustainability focused organizations (i.e. Center for Sustainability, Keep Bulloch Beautiful, SAGE, and Green Ambassadors) to buy composting bins?	1	2	3